

Junction house

PROJECT TYPE

New build

PROJECT LOCATION

Seddon, VIC

DESIGN & BUILD

Positive Footprints

A Melbourne couple opened their home for Sustainable House Day in 2012 to show others that building a sustainable house is an enjoyable and gratifying experience.

WORDS Beth Askham

PHOTOGRAPHY Simon Black

PETER AND SALLY LOVE LIVING IN THEIR INNER-CITY newly built 8.6 Star energy-rated home in Melbourne's west.

The house was designed by Peter, Sally and Melbourne-based building design firm Positive Footprints. Sustainable features include double-glazed windows that let the winter sun in to warm the upstairs suspended concrete slab. In summer the same slab keeps the house cool – even though it tipped the couple over their budget, they think it was worth it.

The house also has good insulation, water-saving taps in the bathroom, bamboo flooring and stairs, and LED lights that reduce their energy bills. The backyard is alive with raised garden beds and rainwater tanks.

“We set out to make the home sustainable for a number of reasons: to feel good when we hear the rain pour into the water tanks, get hot water from the sun, make a long term investment for our retirement to reduce bills (which we have already benefitted from), have a clean house with materials with no noxious fumes, but most importantly, to reduce our carbon footprint,” says Peter.

Peter and Sally enjoy their low energy bills and love that their home maintains a constant comfortable temperature and is warm on winter mornings. The sunlight that pours through the double glazing and the joy of having a bath in water heated by the sun are just some of the pleasures of their new house, he says.

Family visitors from the country often come to stay. Peter says the kids love the balcony and the quiet cul-de-sac where they can ride their bikes safely.

Peter and Sally opened their new home to visitors as they wanted others to benefit from their positive building experience. Peter has some frank advice for people who are considering building or renovating: be bold and don't scrimp on important measures like double glazing. “Work out your vision and your vision may not be that hard to reach,” he says.



ⓘ Polished concrete slab floors upstairs and downstairs provide thermal mass in this highly insulated home with a tight building fabric. Double-glazed windows and doors have FSC European Redwood timber frames.